

AGRiVIEW



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Vermont Recognizes National Weights and Measures Week MARCH 1-7, 2023

By Marc Paquette, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

State and local jurisdictions throughout the country are celebrating Weights and Measures Week which takes place the first seven days of March every year. The date for Weights and Measures Week commemorates the signing of the first United States weights and measures law by President John Adams on March 2, 1799. The evolution of a uniform system of weights and measures has had a profound and necessary impact on society and government. It provides uniformity and confidence in the



Retail package inspections

marketplace for both consumers and businesses. All participants in an economy are more likely to engage openly in trade if they are assured of fairness in transactions. Weights and Measures programs contribute



Electric vehicle charging

greatly to economic development by promoting equity in the marketplace to all stakeholders.

Vermont's Weights and Measures Section is located in the Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food and

Markets. Many consumers are surprised to learn that weights and measures programs are part of many agencies of agriculture nationwide. This is true in Vermont, where much of the state's early economy was based on agricultural products produced on tens of thousands of farms. Historically, commodities produced in Vermont like milk, meat, grains, feed, corn,

and maple were sold by weight or measure, therefore the inspection program was placed in the Agency of Agriculture.

The inspections conducted by

continued on page 5

AGRiVIEW

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

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Investing in Vermont Agriculture

Governor Phil Scott proposed ground-breaking investments in food and farming in his budget address on Friday, January 20. The Governor's budget leverages innovative investments and programs to grow Vermont's food, farm, and forest economy.

"This budget is thoughtful, deliberate, disciplined, and carefully built to make the most of the historic resources available to us. It's focused on investing, not just spending, to get the best results and grow revenue, so we can move families and communities ahead. It prioritizes the regions and people who need our help most, to deliver an increasingly

healthy and vibrant economy in each of your communities," said Governor Phil Scott.

One of the recommendations is grounded in the recently released report of the Governor's Commission on the Future of Agriculture. Among the conclusions, the plan states: "All Vermonters benefit from healthy, nutritious foods and a robust local food system."

To help address this finding, the Governor has proposed investing \$10 million dollars in "grant funding for small and mid-sized agricultural producers and value-added processors in the meat, vegetable and maple sectors." These areas of our food system have been under resourced, or ineligible, for available funding. This historic investment would be distributed to Vermont businesses specializing in meats, vegetables, and maple products. This support will help them grow and become more efficient, while producing more food for Vermont and the region.

The Governor also proposes investing in the work of people who make their living off the land. Under

the Governor's proposed budget \$4 million dollars would be dedicated to the Working Lands Enterprise Fund. This proven program allows food and forestry businesses to expand. This investment was also recommended by the Governor's Commission of Agriculture.

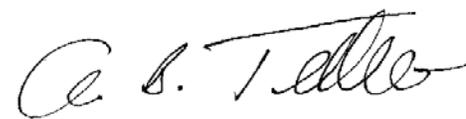
You can read the full report on our website. *The Vermont Future of Agriculture Commission – 2022 Supplemental Report* can be found at <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/administration/governors-commission-future-vermont-agriculture>

These proposed investments will now be presented to the Legislature. The Agency of Agriculture advocates for these investments because they support our farmers and producers, who are feeding us and farming the land.

The Governor's proposal comes

at a time when the region is making critical investments in dairy. Those in the dairy industry have identified local processing as strategy to help businesses prosper. The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center, located at the Agency, has launched a \$13 million program to help dairy processors expand, and process their own Vermont milk. This could mean more local milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, and ice cream. More information can be found on our website <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/dbic>

This is a vulnerable, but exciting, time for Agriculture. The Governor has proposed making long and short-term investments to support our farmers, producers and those who feed us. Agriculture in the Green Mountain State is transforming, emerging as a cornerstone of Vermont's future. Please join us and invest in Vermont.



Anson Tebbetts,
Secretary, Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

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This Month's Recipe

Maple Pudding Cake

Ingredients

1 ½ cups flour
¾ cup sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
¾ cup milk
½ cup chopped nuts (your choice, walnuts, pecans or skip entirely)
1 ½ cup maple syrup
¾ cup water
2 tablespoons butter

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°. Mix flour, sugar, baking powder salt



and milk. Stir in nuts (or not) and pour into a grease 8" square pan. Combine the water, syrup and

butter in a saucepan. Heat until the butter melts. Pour the warm sauce over the cake batter. DO NOT STIR!

Bake at 350° for 45 minutes. Cake should be dark golden brown in color (think crust of bread).

Serve warm with whipped or ice cream.

If you can imagine them not being eaten immediately, you can freeze these for a month or two.

Madison Berry

Increasing Agency Efforts to Support Vermont's Sweet Season

By Madison Berry, VT
Agency of Agriculture,
Food & Markets



Q: Hi Madison! Can you introduce yourself and talk a little about your background?

Of course! I'm a transplant to Vermont by way of mid-Missouri; I grew up in a rural area surrounded by farms, though many were much larger than the typical New England farm. I moved to Vermont in 2016 and I've worked all over the map – nonprofits, education, communications, and farms. In 2020, I bought a farm in New Haven, VT with three of my friends, where we have goats, horses, and chickens. Connecting with my neighbors and with the agricultural community here has been one of the best things I've ever done. Joining the Agency feels like a way to bring all my interests into one place.

Q: My understanding is you will be involved in the Agency's efforts to assist and promote Vermont's Maple Industry. Can you talk a bit about that?

As maple production continues to grow, VAAFM realized it was missing a critical point of contact for the maple industry. My role's main focus is to work as a liaison between the amazing producers, programs, and associations within Vermont. I'll be making connections, listening to what is important to the maple industry, and bringing Agency resources to the table where we can. It ties in nicely with my other role coordinating the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, which has funded multiple maple-focused grants over the years.

Q: From the Agency's perspective, why is our state's maple industry so important to Vermont agriculture and our state in general?

Maple obviously has a huge financial impact on our state as Vermont's third largest agricultural product. But I also think a lot about how important maple is to our local communities and the culture of Vermont. Maple is critical to the Vermont landscape and VAAFM is interested in protecting the product, the producers, and the culture of sugarmaking.

Q: Can you speak to the importance of supporting the Vermont brand as it relates to our maple industry?

We all know Vermont maple is the best there is, right? Now that we have "local food" defined in

statute, it's going to be critical that we leverage this opportunity to support our Vermont producers and products. Though the economics of it are critical, I also think it all goes back to the cultural impact of Vermont Maple, too. Maple has such a huge impact on the local Vermont ecosystem and has for generations—it's a process with a social component, there's local or family producer pride, there's even a strong bartering and gifting element to maple. Protecting the "Vermont" brand means making maple accessible to as many people as possible and preserving this wider impact for generations to come.

Q: What would you say to a Vermont maple producer who is concerned about climate change?

It's a fair concern, and one I don't think any of us take lightly. I'm hopeful that Vermont will

continue to do its part in combating climate change. That said, it's already making a mark on all agricultural sectors in Vermont. I am excited in this part of my role to learn about what opportunities there are for "future proofing" maple operations. If possible, I'd like to be involved in sharing that information and promoting action. As we transition into a new hardiness zone, we also do have to pay attention to some new opportunities—like tapping more red maples, which are better suited to the warmer climate.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to say to our maple farmers?

I'm really excited to immerse myself in maple, and I hope I can learn directly from our maple producers. I can't wait to get to know farmers from around the state. If you have questions or thoughts, don't hesitate to reach out!

Bothfeld Wraps Two Decades of Service to Vermonters

By Scott Waterman, VT Agency of
Agriculture, Food & Markets

Many know someone from a dairy farm, but to say you know nearly every dairy farmer in Vermont may only be possible to say about Diane Bothfeld. For more than 17 years, Bothfeld served Vermont in several roles: Dairy Policy Chief, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and Director of Administrative Services at the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. With her retirement in January, Bothfeld leaves a legacy of unparalleled service to Vermont, our state's dairy industry, farming families and communities.

Growing up on a dairy farm in Cabot gave Diane the commitment to hard work which she brought



to her time in state government. Among her many achievements in support of the Vermont dairy industry, Diane lists the support and growth of organic dairies as a positive for Vermont farm families, as well as the landing of Commonwealth Dairy in Brattleboro, supporting local dairies in their yogurt production. Looking to the future, Diane believes Vermont's farmers will continue to showcase their environmental stewardship in the effort to slow climate change.

"We thank Diane for her service to Vermont and wish her all the best in her retirement," Agriculture Secretary Anson Tebbetts said. "We promise to follow Diane's lead; to work hard every day for all our farm families and support Vermont dairy with the passion and dedication she exemplified. She will be missed."

DAIRY BUSINESS INNOVATION CENTER

NE-DBIC Grants Infuse Millions into Northeast Dairy Processing

By Kim Burns, Vermont
Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC) is excited to announce a \$13 million investment in dairy processing. Through two grant opportunities, this funding will strengthen the dairy industry by investing in research, development, and expansion for processors across the Northeast.

Dairy Processing Research & Development Innovation Grant

Open to dairy processors, producer associations, and



educational institutions across the Northeast, this grant offers funding to conduct research and development projects that

support innovation for Northeast dairy processors across a variety of scales.

Projects funded through this program will support

dairy processors in gaining knowledge that leads to informed, long-term business investments with positive environmental and/or economic impacts. All projects will include an educational or information sharing component for other regional dairy processors.

Awards will range from \$75,000 - \$250,000 with a 25% required match commitment. Total funding equals \$1 million. Applications are due on March 23rd, 2023.

Existing Dairy Processor Expansion Grant

With \$12 million in total funding, this grant addresses the significant need for

investment in processing infrastructure and focuses on expanding the utilization of regionally sourced milk, diversifying the supply chain, and acquiring specialized equipment needed to increase capacity.

Three tiers of grant funding ranges will be available to processors at a variety of sizes. The pre-application period for the first and second tiers begins on March 16 and ends May 11, 2023. Third tier applications will be available in June.

For more information about these two grants, contact the NE-DBIC team at agr.dairyinnovation@vermont.gov

Dairy Farm Cohorts: A New Approach to Technical Assistance

By Katie Spring, Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center at VAAFM

Across the Northeast, dozens of dairy farmers are improving their production strategies and businesses through Dairy Farm Cohorts, an innovative approach to technical assistance funded by the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center (NE-DBIC). Through a mixture of one-on-one support and group farm

visits, Cohort participants receive business and technical assistance over an 18 to 22-month period.

To date, there have been five rounds of cohort-based technical assistance contracts. Here's a look at three of the cohorts:

In Vermont, Dr. Heather Darby of UVM is leading a cohort in cultivating a whole farm forage system that optimizes financial and environmental performance. With 10 farms enrolled in this cohort, farmers are building a for-



age plan with the help of a diverse team of agronomists, animal nutritionists, grazing experts, and farm financial experts to assess the forage program across all levels of farm management.

In Pennsylvania, Jessica

Matthews and Lucas Waybright of PASA are leading a cohort titled Growing New Dairies with New Dairy Farmers. With 5 farms in New York and 5 in Pennsylvania, this cohort complements the existing Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship educational curriculum and offers farmers both grazing and business planning support.

Across Maine, New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont, a cohort of 36 farms is receiving Climate Smart

Farming Education, led by the CROPP Cooperative team. This group of certified organic farmers are focusing on topics such as grazing, forage management, grass-based production systems, silvopasture/agroforestry, and alternative manure management.

A new round of funding for Dairy Cohorts will open in March 6, 2023. For more information visit agriculture.vermont.gov/dbic/grants/cohort-dairy-technical-assistance-contract

Investing in Community-Forward Dairy at Berle Farm

By Katie Spring, Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center at VAAFM

On the eastern edge of Hoosick Falls, New York, just a few miles from Vermont's Bennington border, Berle Farm extends over 600 acres of field and forest. For the past 33 years, Beatrice Berle has stewarded the land, milking cows and processing milk into yogurt and cheeses on the farm.

"It's a privilege to work with cows," Berle said on a mid-December day when part of the NE-DBIC team visited her farm. "They teach boundaries: show up at the same time, take care of them, and they take care of you. Milking is so mellow for me now." Which is good, since many aspects of farming are not mellow.

Interstate Milk Shipping (IMS) licensing, for example. While farmers who process milk or yogurt for sales within their own state don't need an IMS license, those who sell across state lines must meet additional requirements that include extra testing and special packaging. For Berle Farm, that includes IMS certified lids for their glass yogurt jars. When pandemic-induced supply chain issues left the farm without an IMS certified lid for their yogurt, they had to halt their interstate yogurt sales, cutting revenue by half. At the same time, Berle was seeking ways to upgrade the on-farm facilities to meet IMS testing requirements

rather than having to drive milk samples to an off-site lab.

That's where a grant from the Northeast Dairy Business Innovation Center came in to help. With funding through the NE-DBIC Food Safety & Certification Grant, Berle Farm purchased a lab table required for antibiotic testing of milk, pasteurizer and freezer thermometers necessary for IMS documentation, a commercial dishwasher for sanitizing reusable glass yogurt jars, and new IMS lids.

The process of finding new lids took months, with state officials suggesting they buy from a manufacturer in Turkey. Determined to source supplies from the



Berle Farm Milk House.

US, Berle eventually spoke with a sales rep at Mold Rite Plastics in Plattsburgh, NY. The company agreed to collaborate, and IMS certified lids are now available to processors across the Northeast, making it

feasible for more processors to consider replacing plastic containers with glass jars.

With their upgraded on-farm facilities and certified lids, Berle Farm received their IMS license and are once again shipping

interstate. Customers in New York, Vermont, and Massachusetts appreciate how the glass jars help reduce plastic consumption. Thanks to the NE-DBIC grant and locally manufactured IMS lids, Berle Farm is deepening their economic and community impact, and plans to continue doing so.

"If you stay in the community long enough, if you just keep showing up, it becomes part of your culture," Berle said. "People investing in community is a beautiful thing."

Learn more about the Food Safety & Certification Grant on our website: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/dbic/grants/dairy-food-safety-certification-grant>

Weights & Measures

continued from page 1

field staff provide equity in the marketplace and consumer protection by testing and inspecting commercial devices used in trade. Each year the Vermont program inspects over 6,000 gas pumps, 425 fuel oil and 225 propane truck meters, thousands of scales, and packages. Inspectors conduct hundreds of price verification inspections, testing the accuracy of laser scanning systems in retail outlets. This work promotes consumer protection by ensuring that these devices are accurate and correct and by also monitoring pricing integrity and weighing and measuring practices where

transactions occur.

Changes in the marketplace and technology continue to require additional training and program evaluation. The increase in electric vehicles on Vermont's roads and the accompanying EV Charging meters is an area the program may be expanding into. There are specific requirements for commercial EV Charging meters as relates to weights & measures. These meters are measuring devices where purchases occur when charging an EV. Requirements to charge by the kilowatt hour exist and this will require education to EV Meter owners/operators as well as to consumers.

Weights and Measures

Week serves as a reminder of the great value consumers receive from weights and measures inspection programs. The next time you purchase gas, take a trip to the grocery store, or receive a delivery of fuel at your home, remember that staff from the Weights and Measures Section is working diligently to ensure accuracy, fairness, and protection to all parties.

For more information about the Agency of Agriculture's Weights and Measures Program, contact Marc Paquette, Weights

and Measures Chief, Marc.Paquette@vermont.gov or 802-828-2426.



Maple Hydrometer

Harvest and Post-Harvest Water Requirements Come into Effect for Produce Farms Subject to FSMA

By Tucker Diego, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Important food safety requirements recently came into effect in January for produce farms subject to the Food Safety Modernization Act's (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule.

The requirements apply to water used during harvest and in post-harvest activities when the water is intended to or likely to come into direct contact with produce or food contact surfaces. Examples include water used to wash produce, ice used to cool produce, and water used for cleaning food contact surfaces and for handwashing.

Not all produce farms are required to comply immediately. Compliance dates are tiered by farm size. Farms with annual produce sales above \$500,000 were required to comply by January 26, 2023. Farms with sales between \$250,000 and \$500,000 must comply by January 26, 2024, and farms with sales between \$25,000 and \$250,000 by January 26, 2025.

Key harvest and post-harvest water requirements include:

- Water must be safe and of adequate sanitary quality for its intended use.
- Water systems must be inspected at least once annually at the beginning of the growing season and must be adequately maintained.



- Water must meet a microbial standard of no detectable generic *E. coli* bacteria per 100ml sample and must not be from an untreated surface water source.
- Each water source must be tested four times in the first year, then tested at least once in subsequent years. If a water source fails the microbial standard, four new tests must be taken.
- A farm does not need to test water from a municipal water source, but the farm must keep documentation showing the water meets microbial standards.
- If a farm treats their water, they must use an effective treatment method, deliver the treated water in a safe and adequate manner, and monitor treatment to ensure the water is consistently safe and of adequate sanitary quality.
- If water fails to meet the microbial standards or if it is not safe or of adequate sanitary quality, a farm must immediately discontinue using the water and either:
 - Reinspect the water system, identify potential sources of contamination, make necessary changes, and verify that those changes were effective before resuming use of the water;
 - Or, treat the water according to the treatment standards.
- Farms must take the following additional measures when using water during harvest, packing, and holding activities on produce:
 - Manage the water to ensure it is safe and of adequate sanitary quality, including by establish water change schedules for recirculated or batch water.
- Visually monitor the quality of water for buildup of organic material.
- Maintain and monitor the temperature of water to minimize the potential for infiltration.
- Farms must keep the following records:
 - Findings of annual water system inspections.
 - Water test results or certificates from a municipal water supply.
 - Information relied on to show water treatment methods are adequate.
 - Results of water treatment monitoring.
 - Documentation of corrective actions taken if water fails to meet microbial standards.

water requirements other than for sprouts are found in Subpart E (Agricultural Water) of the Produce Safety Rule.

An educational regulatory approach will be taken during a farm's next inspection to assist farms in understanding these requirements. Farms may contact the Agency's produce safety team for additional support at agr.produce@vermont.gov.

Agricultural water requirements relating to pre-harvest water uses, such as for irrigation and crop spraying, remain under enforcement discretion by the FDA until further notice.

Further Resources:

- *FDA Factsheet: Requirements for Harvest and Post-Harvest Agricultural Water*: <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-modernization-act-fsma/requirements-harvest-and-post-harvest-agricultural-water-subpart-e-covered-produce-other-sprouts>
- *FSMA Produce Safety Rule: Subpart E- Agricultural water* <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-21/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-112#subpart-E>
- *NECAFS Clearinghouse: National Water Quality Testing Labs Map* <https://foodsafetyclearinghouse.org/resources/national-water-quality-testing-labs-map>

Harvest and post-harvest



Agency of Agriculture Food & Markets 2023 Scale Testing

By Scott Dolan, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The Weights & Measures Section of the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets will be hosting multiple scale inspection events around the state during April for anyone who uses scale(s) at farmers' markets or farm stands to sell produce or other commodities. This testing is required by law. This will allow the Agency to perform these inspections in a more efficient manner in a way that creates less disruption to you and the farmers' markets.

Please plan to attend one

of the inspection events listed below. Bring your legal for trade scale, and any accessories that you use with it for weighing items for sale.

The following is a list of dates and locations for the testing. Most sites will be at Agency of Transportation (AOT) garages. You can come anytime during our open hours, and no advance appointment is necessary. The test should take 5 to 10 minutes per scale.

Look for the yellow "Scale Check Here" signs.

Questions? Call the Weights & Measures/ Consumer Protection office at 802-828-2426.

Full Day Locations: 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Date	Location	Address
5 April	AOT - Bennington	359 Bowen Road, Bennington
6 April	AOT - Dummerston	870 US Route 5, Dummerston
7 April	AOT - Windsor	1640 US Route 5 North, Windsor
11 April	AOT - Chimney Corners-Colchester	400 US RTE 7, Brentwood Drive, Colchester
19 April	AOT - Clarendon	1628 Route 7B, Clarendon
20 April	AOT - Derby	4611 Route 5, Derby
21 April	AOT - St. Johnsbury	1068 US Route 5, St. Johnsbury
26 April	AOT - Middlebury	341 Creek Road, Middlebury
2 May	Vermont Ag & Env Lab/Weights & Measures Lab	163 Admin Drive, Randolph Center (VTC Campus)

Half Day Locations: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Date	Location	Address
5 April	AOT - Central Garage	1716 US-Route 302, Berlin
18 April	AOT - Morrisville	643 Brooklyn Street, Morrisville

What Are The "Winter Blues" And How To Treat It?

By Juana Lopez, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), also known as the winter blues is a type of depression that is related to the seasons and occurs during the same period each year. According to the article "Seasonal Affective Disorder" they can affect up to 10 percent of people in the United States depending on the location one lives (Roeklein and Rohan, 2005). This is because of the amount of sunlight that decreases during the winter months for those that live far north

or south from the equator.

The main causes of SAD are unknown, however, some factors that can play into this are:

- Circadian Rhythm (Your biological clock)- The decrease of sunlight during the wintertime may disrupt your biological clock or internal body process to regulate your normal sleeping-wake cycle, possibly leading to depression.
- Serotonin levels- Reduced amount of sunlight can drop serotonin levels (brain chemicals) that normally make you feel focused, happy, and calm.
- Melatonin levels-

Hormones that help with sleeping patterns and moods caused by the time of day can be affected by the season.

Symptoms of seasonal affective disorder during the wintertime may include feeling sad all day, losing interest in activities that they once enjoyed, losing energy, overeating or gaining weight, oversleeping, difficulty concentrating, and many more.

People who have severe depression or bipolar disorder are most at risk of seasonal affective disorder. Seasonal affective disorder should be taken seriously and can have serious conse-

quences if not managed. If you or someone you know is feeling this way, there are options you can take to improve your physical and mental health during this time. These include:

- Trying to make your space brighter, if possible, like adding light boxes (phototherapy) or sitting by a window while working.
- Exercising regularly can help relieve stress and lighten up your mood.
- Going outside, preferably during the daytime to receive as much sunlight as possible.
- Create a sleeping schedule that works for you to limit

oversleeping or napping during the day.

- Talk to your physician and get diagnosed.
- Contact Farm First for any questions, information, or assistance in creating a plan that fits your needs when addressing a seasonal affective disorder or other concerns.
 - Call (802)-318-5538
 - Farm First, a Vermont-based program tries to tackle these issues by providing farm owners with confidential and personal services that best suits their needs including but not

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Working Lands Grant Boosts Vermont-Made Flour Production at NEK Grains

By Laura Hardie, Red Barn Writer

In the food world, Vermont is perhaps best known for local cheese, maple syrup, meat, and produce. It's not a place most associate with wheat production. Much of the flour in Vermont is a commodity shipped from out-of-state mills.

Shawn and Sara Gingue, co-owners of Gingue Family Farm, home to NEK Grains, are part of a small group of grain producers in the state working to change that.

"People are new to the idea, and they're like, 'What is this, and how is it different than the stuff you see at the grocery store?'" Sarah said of the questions customers ask at their farm store in Waterford, where they sell their flour, beef, and local maple syrup from a nearby farm.

Though it's rare to see Vermont flour, it wasn't



Gingue family of NEK Grains.

Photo courtesy Laura Hardie of Red Barn Writer

so long ago that flour was a mainstay of the Green Mountain State's economy. Vermonters farmed approximately 40,000 acres of wheat in the early 1800s, providing most of the flour

in the Northeast.

Depleted soils, the introduction of railroads, and the Erie Canal created competition from other states. By 1950, only 900 acres of wheat were in production in Vermont. New England mills went out of business, and many of Vermont's wheat farmers switched to sheep and then dairy farming.

Gingue Family Farm's story is one of the cyclical nature of farming. A dairy farm since 1950, the commoditization and oversupply of milk nationally led the family to stop milking cows in 2015. Like many other dairy farmers, they decided to diversify and differentiate themselves

from commodity products to be more profitable.

Increasing consumer demand for Vermont-made food created an opportunity to bring grain production back to Vermont and for the Gingues to join the movement. The first thing you'll see on the NEK Grains packaging is, 'Grown in Vermont, Milled in Vermont.'

"We want people to connect and to know there's an actual physical location they can visit and watch the flour be milled or look out at the field and see the grains growing," Sara said.

In 2020, they sold their first bag of flour. Today, they sell grain to over 20 wholesale buyers, wheat

berries to bakeries and breweries, and flour and pancake mix to various specialty food producers, co-ops, and bakeries.

They don't own a mill, so they drive two hours round-trip to Elmore Mountain Bread each week, where 300 to 500 pounds of their wheat is milled into 50-pound bags of flour.

Sara then packages it into smaller bags on their commercially licensed home kitchen island. She fits it in between homework and mealtimes for their four children. With the time it takes to drive to Elmore and then package the flour, there is no room for growth.

A Working Lands Enterprise Initiative Grant is making scaling up possible. In 2022, Gingue Family Farm received \$25,000 to purchase their own mill and expand their farm store to allow for a designated order fulfillment space.

The project is slated to be completed in early 2023. If NEK Grains runs the mill at full capacity five days a week, they can make 800 pounds of flour daily or 4,000 pounds a week, a 700 percent increase in production capacity.

Read the full story at workinglands.vermont.gov/blog/nekgrains. For more information about and to apply for WLEI grants, visit <https://workinglands.vermont.gov/grant-contract-opportunities/overview>.



NEK Grains fresh milled flour for sale at newly renovated farm store.



Water Quality Work Continues: 2022 in Review

By Noah Gilbert-Fuller, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Every year in January the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (Agency) delivers a report to the legislature highlighting the efforts that we have made to deliver agricultural water quality results in the past state fiscal year. Here are some highlights from State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2022, which covers June 31, 2021 to July 1, 2022.

A total of \$7.3 million dollars went out to farmers for the Best Management Practices (BMP) program, comprised of \$4.7 million of Agency funds matched with \$2.5 million in federal dollars. BMP project investments help farmers to achieve compliance with production area and manure storage requirements and made up 60% of total water quality investments by AAFM in SFY 2022. The majority of BMP practices were implemented in the Missisquoi tactical basin, with the most funding going to Franklin and Orleans counties. Addison, Orange, and Caledonia counties represented the other major areas of BMP investment, receiving over \$1 million dollars apiece.

In the same time period, 20,389 acres of conservation practices were implemented through cost-share programs such as the Farm Agronomic Practices program (FAP)

and the Pasture and Surface Water Fencing Program (PSWF), with an additional 15,808 acres treated through innovative equipment purchased through the Capital Equipment Assistance Program (CEAP). We also saw increases in agricultural forest and filter strip buffer installation, at 53 acres.

The number of outreach events by the Agency and partner organizations also increased in FY 2022 over FY 2021, with 114 events documented statewide with a total of almost 3,000 attendees. Almost 900 farm visits were conducted through our water quality partnership, and half of these visits were conducted by Agency staff. Close to half of these visits overall were conducted at CSFOs, making up the largest share of visits.

Thanks to the effort and engagement of Vermont farmers, we have been able to document continual reductions in the amount of phosphorus going into our waters year after year. State funding programs are estimated to have reduced approximately 29 metric tons of total phosphorus loading to Lake Champlain and Lake Mephrmagog in SFY 2022. The agricultural sector contributes over 96% of these reductions overall, and has maintained a >95% contribution to phosphorus reductions overall for the last seven years!

It is our pleasure to

continued on page 13

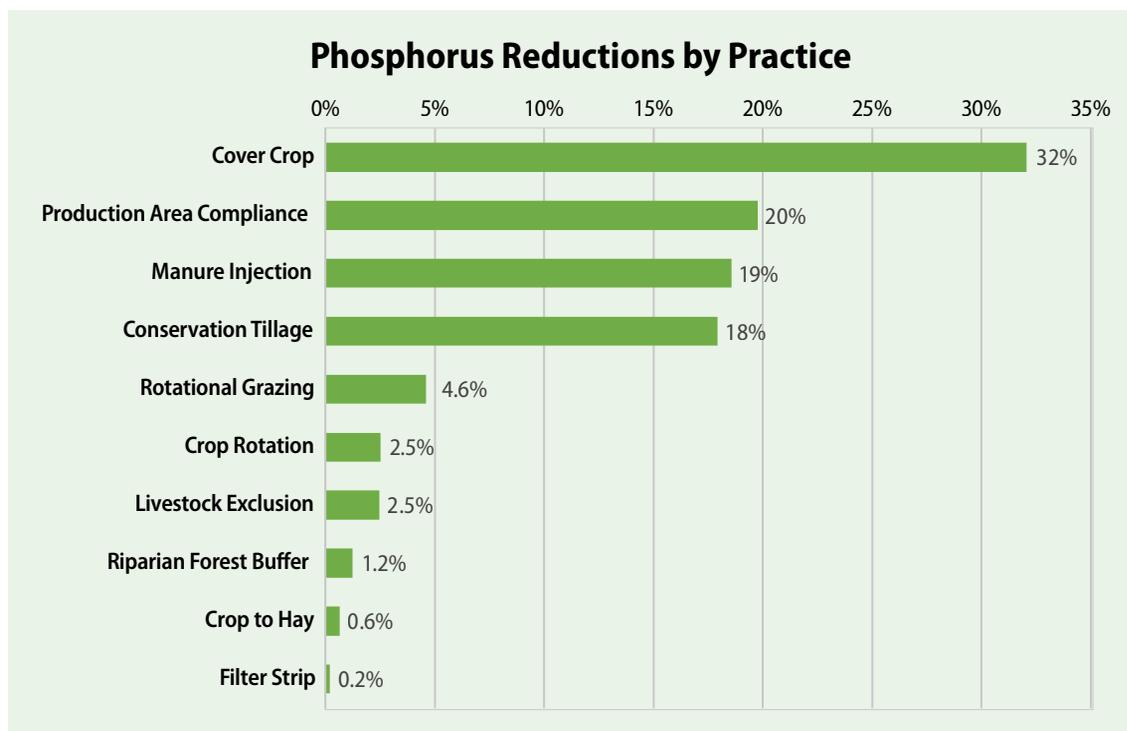


Figure 1. Ultimately, all AAFM's regulatory visits, outreach, and practice installation cost-share supports Vermont farmers to come into compliance and to implement voluntary conservation on their farms. This information is documented and used to calculate phosphorus (P) reductions coming from your land management. Across all years, cover crops have represented the highest share of reductions, followed by production area compliance, manure injection and conservation tillage.

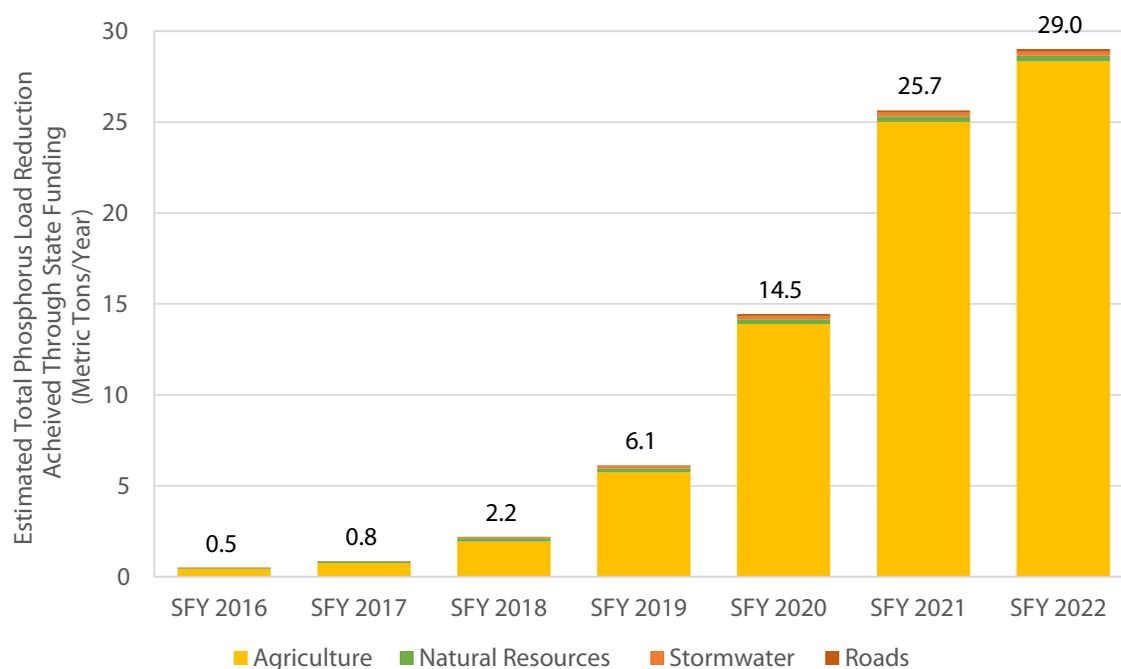


Figure 2. Annual estimated total phosphorus load reductions (metric tons per year) associated with state-funded clean water projects in the Lake Champlain and Lake Mephrmagog basins by land use sector, SFY 2016–2022. Phosphorus reductions from state regulatory programs (e.g., production area compliance) contribute additional reductions not shown here. Find this graph and more information in the statewide Clean Water Initiative 2022 report at <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/cwi/reports>.

VERMONT VEGETABLE AND BERRY NEWS



Compiled by Vern Grubinger,
University of Vermont
Extension
802-257-7967 ext. 303, or
vern.grubinger@uvm.edu
www.vvbga.org

Reports From The Field

(Hinesburg) More growth than normal on hoophouse greens so far in this mild winter. On the downside, Winter Cut Worms continue to be active on hoophouse spinach.

(Burlington) A mild winter has meant our tunnel crops have done very well to date with lots of high-quality spinach, baby lettuce, kale, and herbs without any heat. The mild temps have allowed us to ventilate regularly, which has kept our humidity lower than many winters. Root crops and cabbages are holding well, but our Waltham butternut is going downhill faster than usual and we are culling a large percentage of our final few bins. Autumn Frost and Tetsukabuto still look very good and seem like they should hold until mid-March.

Still liking the clear skin and good eating quality of our Reba potatoes, new to us in 2022. Just finished our last few heads of broccoli in the walk-in a couple weeks ago, hard to believe we held it that long from a mid-November harvest. Looking

back over many years, I think that a drier late summer and autumn improves our long-term storage of roots, squash, and Brassicas more than any other factor except variety selection.

(Guildhall) Potato sales were strong in November and December, but January has been slower. So, selling bulk to brokers and re-packers is kicking up, though some hard news on that front. Prices aren't much better this year than in early 2022, despite inflation. And the market for Golds right now is being pretty well dominated by super clean Canadian stuff. Perhaps some knock on result of PEI getting shut out of the USA for most of last year.

(E. Dorset) Perhaps another item for the good of the order might be "Have you read a good farm or Vermont book this winter?" I would encourage folks to take a look at *Founding Gardeners* by Andrea Wulf. A fun anecdote about a Vermont moose as well as an early trip to Bennington by Thomas Jefferson. Stay toasty.

(Orwell) Winter greens took a bad hit early from winter cutworm, Dipel is supposed to be effective, but didn't seem to put much of a dent in our population, I think we didn't spray often enough and/or late in the day. Lettuces and kale were fine, but spinach and chard quickly because Swiss cheese. We did spend several nights handpicking by headlamp as they fed, which seems to be a reliable but tedious solution.

Overall, 2022 shaped up to be an excellent season from the fun perspective; we had a wonderful group of people working hard on

the farm and all the laughter made us feel wealthy. Our crops and sales were good, but inflation and labor costs are a challenge. Looking towards the new season, we are assessing and planning, with the hopes of doing a little better --but making sure we hang onto the joy from last year.

(Ely) Finally got some snow to cover our 1/3 acre of over-wintering field spinach, but it may have been exposed too long to alternating freezing and thawing to make it. Will find out soon enough. Had a good spinach year. Started selling very nice, un-covered, overwinter spinach the last week of April, and sold our last (under wide row covers) through the second week of December. We missed a few days in mid-season but that was my fault and won't happen again.

Spinach germination was an issue in the real hot weather, but the farm is blessed in having New England's Great River, the Connecticut, as an abutting neighbor, so we had all the water we needed. I'm a little embarrassed to admit that when everyone was drying up, we were irrigating pasture for 10 temporary beef cows.

Semi-retirement has made it possible to try out some new ideas: stale seedbed techniques, possible weed control with new and stronger mustard biofumigants, different green manure/cover crop combinations, sequential pollinator plantings, and some low tillage practices. Will be sure to report any findings, good or bad.

Recent attendance at the Eco-Farm Conference in Monterey, CA, as well as at our own excellent VVBGA

meeting in Montpelier provided sources of new ideas and new friendships. The vegetable and berry growing business here in Vermont is clearly thriving, despite many unique challenges, and I'm optimistic about the coming season.

(Westminster West) Still working through numbers from last year, but almost every crop we grew had a spectacular year: quality, yields and happy customers. We topped the previous year's sales by a wide margin. Overhead expenses are stubbornly high, and that will be this year's biggest project to lower overhead costs. Margins increased in almost all crops thankfully.

Trying some different ways to understand how each crop performs financially and comparing to each other to better see what crops might be eliminated and which will be expanded. Winter squash, potatoes, tomatoes, garlic, carrots and celery as well as Napa, beets and turnips showed terrific margins but sadly raspberries for us are proving to be a labor sink so will be yanked!

Trying to keep the present equipment as well as labor levels, keeping the same crew for twenty-five plus years has really helped the efficiency and margins and keeps the strains of work to a bare minimum as we all know each other so well. Had to replace a crucial greenhouse furnace this week on top of everything which won't help the numbers.

Time To Sample High Tunnel Soils

High tunnel soils behave differently than field soils, and tunnel crops have unique nutrient demands.

The University of Maine Soil Lab provides a high tunnel soil test that analyzes both reserve and water soluble nutrients and provides nutrient and fertilizer recommendations calibrated for high tunnel crops. Soil sample as you would for a field soil, randomly sampling from 15-20 locations 6-8" deep. Mix well and mail 1 pint of soil immediately to the lab. For more information, contact rebecca.maden@uvm.edu.

VVBGA 2023 Annual Meeting Presentations

Presentations can be viewed by going to <https://vvbga.org/2023-annual-meeting>. When you click on an individual talk title the pdf will open; click the slide show icon at the top to scroll through a presentation, one slide at a time.

Presentations and Proceeding from NEVFC Are Online

Content from the 3-day 2022 New England Vegetable & Fruit Conference can be viewed at <https://newenglandvfc.org/2022-presentations-and-proceedings/> which included sessions on Sweet Corn, Strawberry, Apples, Cut Flowers, Equipment, Cucurbits, Organic Production, Stone Fruit, Technology, Leafy Greens, Brambles, Cover Crop/No Till, FSMA, Brassicas and Legumes, Specialty Fruit, Mushrooms, Potatoes, Post-Harvest/PFAS, Tomatoes, Blueberry, Winter Growing, Ag Tourism and Marketing, Grapes, Alliums & Roots, High Tunnels, and Improving Farm Business. Wow!

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CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad in *Agriview* sign up to be a paid subscriber — visit our website: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/administration/vaafm-news/agriview/advertising-agriview>

Email: Ag.agriview@vermont.gov, phone: 802-828-1619. Deadline for submissions is the 1st of each month for next month's issue. Example: January 1st deadline for February issue.

Employment

Equipment Operator. Crop Production Assistant. CSA Coordinator & Wash Pack Manager. All positions with details at root5farm.com (5)

text 802-291-4525 (3)

1) CHEESE MAKING EQUIPMENT: COPPER VAT, 2 pile presses and micro perfs, including all the associated miscellanea required to make an award-winning alpine style cheese. Sold on site. 2) BISON TRAIL HAND STOCK TRAILER. Looks rough; still tough, we need something bigger. Sold on site. North Pomfret, VT. info@ThistleHillFarm.com. 802-47-1884 (4)

Equipment

Tri- axle equipment hauling trailer with pintel hitch. Steel body 8' by 16' with steel frame and treated wood deck. Some rust in frame. Registered in Vt until 9/23. Good rubber. spare tire, pickup pintel hitch, ramps included. \$950 obo. Call or

For Agricultural Events and Resources Visit:

- The VT Agency of Agriculture Events Calendar: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/calendar>
- UVM Extension Events Calendars: https://www.uvm.edu/extension/extension_event_calendars
- Vermont Farm to Plate Events Calendar: <https://www.vtfarmtoplate.com/events>
- Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont Events Calendar: <http://nofavt.org/events>
- DigIn Vermont Events Calendar: <https://www.diginvt.com/events/>
- Agricultural Water Quality Regulations: <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/water-quality/regulations>
- Agency of Ag's Tile Drain Report now available here: <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/tile-drainage>
- VAAFM annual report available here: http://agriculture.vermont.gov/about_us/budgets_reports
- Farm First: Confidential help with personal or work-related issues. More info call: 1-877-493-6216 any-time day or night, or visit: www.farmfirst.org
- Vermont AgrAbility: Free service promoting success in agriculture for people with disabilities and their families. More info call 1-800-639-1522, email: info@vcil.org or visit: www.vcil.org.

For more agricultural events visit our *Funding Opportunities & Resources for Businesses* webpage at: http://agriculture.vermont.gov/producer_partner_resources/funding_opportunities

4.5 ton grain bin, 6.5 ton grain bin, (2) 8 ton grain bins priced to sell. 38 John Deere hay elevator. 16 ft New Holland hay elevator. 802-624-0143.(5)

Meyers Snow plow 8'6" wide \$800. 7-yard dump body on INK Truck \$1500. 802-558-0166 (5)

Horsepower Delaval vacuum pump, good shape. 3 Pt: 7 ft back blade. 8 ton grain bins, 32 ft John Deere hay elevator, 16 ft new holland hay elevator. 802-893-4683, 802-624-0143 (7)

Micro Cheeseplant Equipment: AlpineGlo Farm is looking to sell all cheese house contents as one package, this includes a 30 gallon pasteurizer. Real estate is not included in the sale. For a complete list of inventory and details please contact the farm directly. Located in Southern Vermont. Asking \$30,000 Contact Rachel Ware at rachel@alpineglofarm.com or (802) 463-2018 www.alpineglofarm.com (7)

60-gallon Upright Milkplan Bulk Tank \$3700 Semen Tank \$300 Pick Up Only, Killington VT Call 802-490-5712 (7)

Equine

Trailer – 2 horse thorobred size, dressing room, ramp and tag along. 802-345-8026 (6)

6 stable available, indoor arena. Outdoor paddocks, do all work yourself and all feed. Slight fee for water & lights. 802-345-8026 (6)

Hay, Feed & Forage

400 Wrapped Bales Available. 1st May cut. 2nd June cut. 3rd July cut. Call 802-446-2791(2)

Certified Organic wrapped round bales for sale. approx 50%dry matter. Have forage sample results for 3rd cut, \$45,00/ 50.00 per bale depending on which hay is taken. Call or text 1-802-210-5279 (5)

4x5 round bales. Early 1st cut. 802-265-4566 (6)



4x4 Wrapped Round Bales, 1st cut 2022 for sale. \$45/bale 4x4 Dry Round Bales, \$50/bale 4x4 Wrapped Round Bales, 1st cut 2021 \$40/bale Pickup at the farm. 1710 Wild Apple Road, South Pomfret, 05067 Call Tom at 802-457-5834 (6)

Good Quality First cut netted large dry round bales, \$50 Excellent Quality First cut 9x200 ft Ag Bags of 2021 Haylage early cut Delivery available, David Leblanc 802-988-2959 or 802-274-2832 (6)

Organic round bales for sale. Well wrapped, tedded, June cut, 2022. Never wet; sweet smell. I load, you haul. \$35 at the farm. Easy access for trailer or truck. Thistle Hill Farm. N. Pomfret, VT info@ThistleHillFarm.com. (7)

CHITTENDEN COUNTY June cut Hay, Never wet, 4' X 5' Round Bales, \$35/bale loaded, Cash/good check only, Westford, Ray @802-355-2930 (5)

FRANKLIN COUNTY Good quality hay 1c & 2c from western US & Canada. Alfalfa orchard and orchard sweet grass. 18 to 20% plus protein. Large bales and organic by trailer loads. Large or small square bales of straw whole or processed at farm we load or direct delivery by trailer load. 802-849-6266 or 802-373-5217 (12)

ORANGE COUNTY Large square bales. 1st, 2nd and 3rd cutting plus mulch bales.

Wrapped and dry. 1000+ available. Some round bales available too. 802-236-7741 or csfarm1@gmail.com (2)

RUTLAND COUNTY

Small square bales. First cut. 210 available at \$5 each. 802-773-8716

WASHINGTON COUNTY

100+ 4x4 wrapped round bales \$50 each 802-793-3511 (2)

Small square bales – 1st cut \$6.00 or less for quantity. 802-793-3511 (4)

Sheep & Goats

Now taking orders for our 2023 registered Alpine kids. Lazy Lady Farm, with 35 years of breeding experience will have doe and buck kids, from 30 does, available starting in March. We have a 2800# herd average with DHIA testing. We are CAE, CL and Johnes free with annual testing. Please visit our website: www.lazyladyfarm.com. for farm info and our sales list. 802-595-4473 laini@lazyladyfarm.com (6)

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Vegetable & Berry News

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Business Coaching / Budget Clinics

UVM Extension Business Specialists Betsy Miller, Chris Lindgren and Zac Smith are available to work one-on-one with farm, forest and maple businesses on their finances. Use the time to develop a balance sheet, update financial statements, review a business plan, consider changes to your operation, ask questions and more. To sign up visit: <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/agbizcoaching>

"Scrub" Winter Twilight Roundtables

To register for any of these free on-line events go to <http://go.uvm.edu/scrubevents>. These are recorded and posted on the SCRUB YouTube playlist. To learn more about this USDA NIFA FSOP project and see

our extensive collection of pack shed and produce safety resources, visit <http://go.uvm.edu/scrub>.

* Parent-Farmer-Wash/ Pack Manager Strategies to Keep Kids Happy and Produce Safety Risks Low. February 28, 4-5:30 pm.

Join farmer-parents to share challenges and lessons learned from running their businesses while running after their kids. Topics include time management, flow for effectiveness and efficiency, food safety with kids, employee training to help with kids on the farm. Farmers with and without kids are encouraged to attend!

* NOT Cleaning with Water and Other Things NOT to Do. March 7, 4:00-5:30 pm. Sometimes no action can save time, increase profitability, AND lower food safety risk. Join experienced growers to discuss benefits and

timing of "dry cleaning" and other things NOT to do, or clean, in your wash pack.

* How to Work with Contractors on Farm Construction Projects. March 14, 4:00-5:30 pm.

Construction of wash, pack and cold storage facilities requires special considerations (drainage, produce safety, pest prevention, lighting, etc.) and technical terms that many contractors are not familiar with. Join this group of experienced growers and the UVM Ag Engineering team to discuss essential terms and tricks for working with contractors.

Support For Reporting Vermont Surface Water Withdrawals

If you irrigate from a river, stream, lake, or natural pond, you likely need to comply with Vermont's surface water bill (Act 143). Thanks

to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, we have funding to purchase and install water meters that will track your water use and make reporting easy. Please contact Becky Maden, rebecca.maden@uvm.edu, for more

information. Estimates for 2022 surface water use are due now. Forms are available here. Contact Ryan Patch at the Agency, Ryan.Patch@vermont.gov, with questions about the regulation or reporting.

Winter Blues

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limited to financial or family concerns, illness, depression, alcoholism, etc.

For more information and citations, visit: www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions

<https://www.farmfirst.org/>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3004726/>

Roecklein, K. A., & Rohan, K. J. (2005). Seasonal affective disorder: an overview and update. *Psychiatry* (Edgmont (Pa. : Township)), 2(1), 20–26.

Classifieds

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Wanted

A 1941 farm license plate with the prefix AGR. Also need a 1944 farm plate. Terry at 802-885-5405 (6)

Hay elevator in good working condition with motor 24' is perfect. Please email with pic and info. You can call me Israel at 802-563-6061 Appreciated!! Email is Israel1@gmail.com (7)

For Sale

Entire Micro Dairy and Cheese House For Sale: AlpineGlo Farm has been successfully making farmstead goat

cheeses since 2016 in the Windham County area. Inventory includes a herd of 12 ADGA Alpine Dairy Goats (currently due to kid in April), all milk parlor contents, and all cheese house contents including 30 gallon pasteurizer. We currently are looking to sell the entire business, to be set up on your own farm. Real estate is not included in the sale. For a complete list of inventory please contact the farm directly. Located in Southern Vermont. Contact Rachel Ware at rachel@alpineglofarm.com or (802) 463-2018. www.alpineglofarm.com. (7)



VERMONT PESTICIDE APPLICATOR MEETING

Updates on agricultural crops, pest management, and pesticide safety
This program will provide Vermont or New York recertification credits.*

March 20: Virtual via Zoom

Register at <http://go.uvm.edu/vtpa23>

**Those seeking NY credit must submit a copy of their applicator ID and check-in for roll call prior to start of meeting. See program for details.*

Visit www.uvm.edu/extension/psep for more information about the program or contact Sarah Kingsley-Richards at (802) 656-0475 sarah.kingsley@uvm.edu



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
EXTENSION



VERMONT
AGENCY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & MARKETS

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, University of Vermont Extension, Burlington, Vermont, University of Vermont Extension, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating, offer education and employment to everyone without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. Any reference to commercial products, trade names, or brand names is for information only, and no endorsement or approval is intended.

INITIAL PESTICIDE CERTIFICATION MEETING

Review of the Northeast CORE Manual followed by the Vermont Pesticide Applicator CORE Exam
This program will provide Vermont recertification credits.

April 18: Fireside Inn & Suites, West Lebanon NH

April 20: Robert Miller Community Center, Burlington VT

Register at <https://go.uvm.edu/core23>

Visit www.uvm.edu/extension/psep for more information about the program or contact Sarah Kingsley-Richards at (802) 656-0475 sarah.kingsley@uvm.edu



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Best Management Practices Program Applications Due April 1

The Best Management Practices (BMP) Program provides assistance to farmers in the implementation of conservation practices to improve water quality. Practices eligible for BMP include:

- manure storage,
 - composting stack pad,
 - barnyard runoff collection,
 - gutter/ditch clean water diversion,
 - laneway development and stream crossings,
 - exclusion fencing and watering facilities, and
 - milk house waste collection and treatment.
- Applications to receive

technical and financial assistance through the Agency's BMP Program are due April 1. While BMP applications can be submitted at any time, applications received prior to April 1 will be given priority consideration for assistance in 2023. Applications submitted after April 1 will be evaluated in the following calendar year. Submission of an application does not guarantee grant funding or assistance. Applicants will receive a response from the BMP program regarding their application status prior to July 2023.

Visit <http://agriculture.vermont.gov/bmp> for more information on the BMP Program or to find an application. If you have any questions, or to request a BMP application by mail, please contact the AAFM engineer below who works in your area.

Franklin/Grand Isle
Dillan Westcom,
(802) 522-6962
Dillan.Westcom@vermont.gov

Orleans/Essex
Andrew Mitchell
(802) 505-5125
Andrew.Mitchell@vermont.gov

Chittenden/Lamoille Washington/Caledonia
Matt Gardner
(802) 622-4612
Matt.Gardner@vermont.gov

Addison/Rutland
Jason Bradley
(802) 461-3065
Jason.Bradley@vermont.gov

Rachel Seigel
(802) 661-8771
Rachel.Seigel@vermont.gov

Orange/Windsor Windham/Bennington
Amer Suvalic
(802) 522-4305
Amer.Suvalic@vermont.gov



Water Quality

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support practices that are beneficial to our environment and for the stewards of our agricultural lands. We can look forward to more opportunities in the new year, as we continue to show the legislature the impact of the work our farmers do!

For more information on the effects of

implementation efforts led by the Agency of Agriculture, visit agriculture.vermont.gov/water-quality/additional-resources-and-reports. Federal and local partners from across the Vermont Agricultural Water Quality Partnership have contributed to outreach, funding, tracking, and reporting on farm water quality reductions across the state. To learn more, visit vtagricleanwater.org

Upcoming Grant Opportunities

The Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets is pleased to be able to help you more easily identify upcoming grant opportunities. Please go to <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/calendar> for more information.

Programs Open Year-Round
Farmstead Best Management Practices (BMP) Program
Technical and financial assistance for engineered conservation practices on Vermont farms.
Jenn LaValley
Jenn.LaValley@vermont.gov
802-828-2431

Pasture And Surface Water Fencing (PSWF) Program
Technical and financial assistance for pasture management and livestock exclusion from surface water on Vermont farms.
Mary Montour
Mary.Montour@vermont.gov
802-461-6087

Grassed Waterway and Filter Strip (GWFS) Program
Technical and financial assistance for implementing buffers and seeding down critical areas on VT farms.
Sonia Howlett
Sonia.Howlett@vermont.gov
802-522-4655

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
Implementation costs of vegetated buffers and rental payments for maintained buffers on Vermont agricultural land.
Ben Gabos
Ben.Gabos@Vermont.gov
802-461-3814

Phil Wilson
Phillip.Wilson@vermont.gov
802-505-5378

April
Local Food Market Development Grants
Grants to help farm and food producers access local institutional and wholesale markets
Gina Clithero
Gina.Clithero@vermont.gov
802-585-6225

May
Farm Agronomic Practices (FAP) Program
Per-acre payments for conservation practices on Vermont farms and support for one-time water quality educational events or trainings
Nina Gage
Nina.Gage@vermont.gov
802-622-4098

Reports to the 2023 Vermont Legislature

Each year, the Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets submits reports to the legislature as required by law. You can find these reports on the Agency's website by going to <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/reports-2023-vermont-legislature>

Payment for Eco-System Services Working Group Report (PDF)

Over three years, the Payment for Eco-System Services Working Group developed a vision for a payment program which will increase carbon storage, nutrient, soil, and storm water retention, water quality outcomes, and the ability to support biodiversity, thus improving the health of the broader ecosystem for all Vermonters while also supporting the economic health of Vermonters engaged in agriculture. The Working Group recognizes that Vermont farmers can make (and are already making) substantial contributions to water quality through adopting agricultural conservation practices across their farm. Many of these water quality conservation practices also provide a co-benefit of improving soil health metrics.

Vermont Future of Agriculture Commission - 2023 Supplemental Report (PDF)

The Governor's Commission on the Future of Vermont Agriculture was convened on April 1, 2021 and submitted an initial Action Plan to the

Governor on November 15, 2021.¹ The Executive Order further required the Commission to measure and evaluate progress and submit a supplemental report to the Governor assessing the impact of its work and implemented strategies on or before November 15, 2022.² This report constitutes the Commission's fulfillment of its obligation under the Executive Order.

Act 250 Jurisdiction over Accessory On-Farm Business | Final Report (PDF)

As part of Act 182 enacted in 2022, the Legislature directed the Natural Resources Board to issue a report with recommendations on how Act 250 jurisdiction should apply to agricultural businesses, including those located on properties already operating as farms.

New Farmer Resource Coordination Advisory Report (PDF)

As part of Act 185 enacted in 2022, the Legislature directed the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets to issue a report with recommendations on programs and services for new farmers:

This report is prepared with the intention to understand how Vermont can organize its resources to better serve aspiring and new farmers. The report focuses on the existing programs available to new farmers and the degree of coordination across these

programs. The report presents recommendations to enhance the network of support for new farmers to get started in Vermont.

2022 Annual Report on Financial and Technical Assistance for Agricultural Water Quality (PDF)

The Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets Water Quality Division has submitted this report today to the General Assembly as required in 6 V.S.A. Ch 215 § 4825. This report outlines the Financial and Technical Assistance efforts performed by the Water Quality Division.

Performance Measures for the Memorandum of Understanding Between the Agency of Natural Resources and Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (PDF)

This report is submitted to the Vermont Legislature to highlight measures of success in the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (AAFM). The Secretaries of ANR and AAFM are required to adopt the MOU for the non-point program describing program administration, grant negotiation, grant sharing, and coordination on watershed planning activities. This MOU, attached, was revised March 17, 2017. The two

agencies have chosen several measures to indicate various aspects of our coordination. In this document, AAFM identifies which agency addresses which type of water quality violations, introduces the performance measures chosen, discusses the limitations of these measures, and presents the performance measures.

Annual Agriculture Innovation Board Report (PDF)

The Agricultural Innovation Board must issue a report annually to the General Assembly on or before January 15 that recommends policy solutions to assist farmers in; reducing the use of and exposure to pesticides; and the use of innovative or

alternative practices; and propose an annual budget report that provides ideas for funding sources for any new programs recommended in the annual report.

Report on Importation of Food Residuals for Farming (PDF)

As part of Act 41 enacted, the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets must on or before January 15, [annually], submit to the Senate Committees on Agriculture and on Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committees on Agriculture, Food Resiliency, and Forestry and on Environment & Energy a report regarding importation of food residuals for composting under 10 V.S.A. § 6001(22)(H).

Agency Contact Numbers

To help you find the right number for your question, please consult the list below. You are always welcome to call our main line 802-828-2430. We will do our best to route you to person most able to answer your question quickly and accurately.

Program Phone Numbers

Act 250	802-461-6798
Animal Health	802-828-2421
Business Development	802-828-1619
Dairy	802-828-2433
Enforcement: Water Quality or Pesticide	802-828-2431
Feed, Seed, Fertilizer & Lime	802-828-5050
Licensing & Registration	802-828-2436
Meat Inspection	802-828-2426
Produce Program	802-522-7811
VT Agriculture & Environmental Lab	802-585-6073
Water Quality BMP	802-828-3474
Water Quality Grants	802-622-4098
Water Quality Reports	802-272-0323
Weights & Measures	802-828-2433
Working Lands	802-917-2637

Houseplants: Toxic For Pets?

By Jodi Larison, UVM Extension Master Gardener Program

In their book, *How to be your Dog's Best Friend*, the Monks of New Skete suggest that for many people, dogs and houseplants are the only readily available touchstones with the natural world. They also say that owners must reflect on their canine's environment and make it as healthy as possible.

I recently brought a new member into my pack, Betty, a nine-week-old French bulldog. I knew bringing Betty home meant that I needed to puppy-proof my condo as many plants are toxic to pets including puppies, kittens, dogs and cats. So part of preparing for Betty's homecoming was

determining which of my houseplants might need to be relocated.

Since I live in a small condo, I do not have many houseplants, just chives, oregano, philodendron, rosemary and spider plants. Of these, chives, oregano and philodendron are toxic for both dogs and cats while rosemary and spider plants are not. So I relocated my toxic houseplants to places where Betty cannot access them.

How did I determine which plants were safe for my puppy?

I did some online research and found information on plants that are poisonous and non-poisonous to pets on the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) website.

You can check out <https://go.uvm.edu/toxic-plants> to determine if your plants are safe for your pets. Plants are listed both by common and scientific names.

While many types of plants are toxic to both dogs and cats, the toxicity level often varies by animal species as well as by plant. One of the most common symptoms of plant poisoning in both dogs and cats is vomiting.

However, many plants are not toxic to dogs and cats. So before I add any new plants, I will make sure that they won't harm my fur baby if eaten, especially if they are indoor plants.

Whether bringing home a puppy or kitten or already living with a dog or cat, research your houseplants and determine whether they

might be toxic. If they might be, move them to a place where your pet will not have access to them. This advice applies even if your dog or cat does not normally eat plants.

Before Betty, I had a mammoth bulldog, Lola Brooke aka B, who liked to eat grass when outside but did not munch on other plants, indoors or out. One time, I brought a potted hot pepper plant inside in October before the first frost. That plant remained untouched until April when B decided she would try some hot peppers.

I did not see her eat them, but I knew there was a problem when she started racing around and vomited

numerous times. Luckily, after a call to an emergency veterinary practice, I learned that water mixed with milk, along with a side of bread, would resolve this issue.

Bottom line, as a pet owner, it is your responsibility to create a safe environment for your pet, young or old. Should you have an issue with your pet ingesting a plant, look up information on the plant to see if it is potentially toxic.

If it is, contact your local vet, emergency vet or a poison hotline for animals, such as the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center at (888) 426-4435. Note that pet poison hotlines probably will charge a consultation fee for handling your call.



New England Dairy Highlights Cow Care in Q&A with a Vermont Dairy Farmer

By Elicia Pinsonault Farmer Relations Manager, New England Dairy

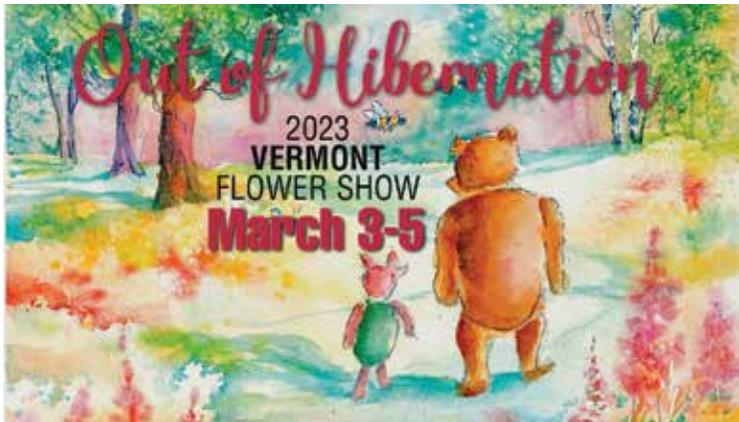
Most consumers today are at least three generations removed from agriculture. For dairy farmers, this contributes to misconceptions about cow care and comfort. Millennial consumers are especially attentive to where their products come from, including how cows are treated, and use this information to guide their purchasing decisions. New England Dairy has been creating content to highlight how farmers care for their cows to address uncertainty about topics including bedding, hoof trimming, antibiotic use, and more.

New England Dairy dietetic intern Fred Durso Jr. recently interviewed dairy farmer Will Gladstone of Newmont Farm in Fairlee, VT about winter weatherization and cow comfort. New England Dairy shared this interview on its website and social media to give consumers a glimpse into on-farm practices and educate them on what it takes to care for cows throughout the year. Read the blog post at NewEnglandDairy.com.

The 2023 Vermont Flower Show

MARCH 3-5, 2023

CHAMPLAIN VALLEY EXPOSITION, ESSEX JUNCTION, VT



The Vermont Flower Show is back! After nearly a four-year hiatus due to the pandemic, we return stronger, even more creative, and ready to celebrate our 20th year. This year's Grand Garden Display theme of "Out of Hibernation! Spring Comes to the 100-Acre Wood" is sure to inspire and will be a magical garden journey bringing the original world of Winnie-the-Pooh to life.

The show is open to the public on Friday, March 3 from 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Saturday, March 4 from 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Sunday March 5 from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. The daily cost of admission is \$25 for adults, \$20 for seniors (60+) and college students, \$7 for students (ages 5-17), and free for children under the age of 4. Tickets can be purchased in advance at <https://vnlavt.org/vermont-flower-show/buy-tickets/>. Parking for this event is free!

For more information about the 2023 Vermont Flower Show, call (888) 518-6484 or visit the website at <https://www.vnlavt.org/#vtflowershow>



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Last Chance for 2023!

Funding Opportunities for Vermont Specialty Crops Now Open for Applications

By Madison Berry, VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets announces \$200,000 in grant funds to strengthen Vermont's specialty crop industries and producer associations. Specialty crops are defined as fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, horticulture crops (including honey, hops, maple syrup and mushrooms), and nursery crops (including Christmas trees and floriculture).

Interested applicants should apply by February 28, 2023 at 11:59 PM.

To apply, download the Request for Applications (RFA) at agriculture.vermont.gov/grants/specialtycrop. Applicants must submit a pre-application by February 28, 2023 at 11:59 PM. A review committee will invite the top-ranking projects to submit full applications.

Funds are awarded through a competitive review process guided by industry, nonprofit and government stakeholders. The Agency plans to award approximately \$200,000 in Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) funds in 2023.

For more information contact: Madison Berry by email AGR.SpecialtyCrops@vermont.gov or by phone (802) 622-4626.